

Research Article

Providing a Framework for the Evaluation of Process and Content of Development Programs; Evaluating the Fourth and Fifth Law Development Program of Iran

Saeid Hosein Rafiei and Seyed Ali Reza Tabatabaei
Research Institute for Science, Technology and Industrial Policy of
Sharif University of Technology, Iran

Abstract: The purpose of this study is providing a framework for the evaluation of process and content of development programs and evaluating the fourth and fifth law development program of Iran. Policy evaluation is one the most important measures in the policy cycle and is implemented with the purpose of learning from the results of stage. Given the wide dimensions of policy making, achieving a model for evaluating policy is faced with many complexities. In this study with reviewing previous experiences in the field of policy evaluation, an integrated model for evaluating policy, is presented from two main aspects of the process and the content and then with using this model, the Fourth Program and fifth development of the Iran, is investigated.

Keywords: Development programs, fifth law development program, fourth law development program, Iran

INTRODUCTION

Iran has a history of more than 60 years of planning from year 1327 AH. equal to 1948 AD and in the ten approved program and it has been done under the titles "program development" and "development". Despite the long history in planning, the documentation in evaluating different aspects of the programs was not found. Evaluation is the last ring of the policy cycle that its goal is to evaluate amount of achieving the goals and designated missions and reforming repeated policy in the cycle. And obviously, if it's properly assessed, besides providing the possibility of conducting performance analysis it also helps to improve public policy dynamically and will modificate the public policy process constantly. But despite the fact that assessment is a great opportunity to learn and improve planning, mainly because it is done after the implementation plan and all the attention is towards the next law program, it is less placed on the agenda. Also political perceptions and non-technical evaluations that sometimes is from program obstruct blocks the free activities related to evaluation. One of the results of the lack of attention to this matter is the lack of appropriate models and native for the evaluating policy. In this study with the aim of obtaining an appropriate model for evaluating different aspects of policy, at first various models of the elements of the policy cycle are introduced and a model appropriate for the conditions of project implementation is selected. Then with the wide review of evaluation models, an attempt is made to present the range and function of these models in the

policy assessment. Then by choosing appropriate models, a framework is introduced for evaluating different dimensions of policy and then the fourth and fifth Development of the program in Iran will be evaluated.

The purpose of this study is providing a framework for the evaluation of process and content of development programs and evaluating the fourth and fifth law development program of Iran.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Policymaking and its components: Policymaking is editing and providing criteria and scales in which government policy and collective interests of the nation be taken into consideration (Alvani, 2009). It is evident that this does not occur suddenly and immediately rather as a process is done at different stages and includes operational that the complex factors and includes a variety of variables. Scientists have introduced various models of the policymaking process and its components, that is discussed thouroly in this section according to the subject and the content of this study.

Meier (1991) provides a linear model on policy explanation based on initial model Lasswell (1951) Based on his model, the first policy process is prediction and prescription during which problem is diagnosed and possible solutions are recommended. Then policymaker using the State centered forces and society centered forces, after evaluation of available alternatives, selects the appropriate policy and by

Corresponding Author: Saeid Hosein Rafiei, Research Institute for Science, Technology and Industrial Policy of Sharif University of Technology, Iran

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implementing it, the results are obtained (Meier, 1991). This linear view is also seen in the Grindle and Thomas (1991). In this model, the Process starts with a quandary and then the decision is made whether to take any action or not (Agenda phase). In addition, towards the decision to reform or lack of reform and after the implementation phase we are witnessing the success or failure of politics (Grindle and Thomas, 1991). Also Jones (1984) has introduced the policy-making process in four linear stages, including setting the agenda, providing solutions and choosing the right solution, implementation analysis and introduced analysis evaluation (Walker *et al.*, 2001). Alvany (2009), In other words, knows this process as a range of measures that begins with recognizing and Understanding the problem and will form, prepare and conduplicate the policy by bringing it up in public organizations. Then the policy, is legalized and legitimate and will be implemented after being notified (Alvani, 2009).

Different approach and with regard to policy complexities and policy process, Walker *et al.* (2001) considers policymaking issue related to future, unpredictable and suggests that rather than searching for the best policy, in accordance with the policies we are pursuing. In this regard, two general thinking (Thinking phase) and stage (Implementation phase) are introduced. In the first phase, first by setting the stage, policy objectives, choices and successful policies are defined and then an attempt is made to assemble the basic policy. Then by specifying vulnerable points, signs of political progress and proceedings extenuating, the rest of the policy is specified. In the second stage also policy is implemented and according to conditions caused, defensive measures or correctives are in agenda (Jones, 1984). Havelt and Ramesh (2002) also confirmed complexities policy process and diversification of this process in various policies, introducing a cycle that starts with the legislative and after planning and decision makings, leads to implementation. Then with evaluating results, a feedback is given to the beginning of the cycle and the cycle starts over. They considered this cycle applicable however it has weaknesses such as failure to provide the cause and affect relationships, lack of numeration of specific characteristics of some policies and or displacement of policy process in some cases (Havelt and Ramesh, 2002).

Politics and policy evaluation: Evaluation, as one of the most important proceedings policy process, is mentioned somehow in most of the above models. In the literature of policy, various models are introduced for evaluation. These models are sometimes focused on the evaluation of one stage on the process of policymaking and sometimes with a more general approach, further steps are taken. On the other hand, some models have considered measures that have to be ripened in the step by step process of the policymaking

with a process view and some other models have evaluated the policy with a content view as a policymaking process output. Also some views have tried to describe the patterns prevailing in one phase of the policy process by crossing attitude of process or content. According to Havelt and Ramesh (2002), two elements of the policy cycle are "legislative" and "arrangement and choice". According to this study, the following is an attempt to establish a general Recognition of the cognitive research model by reviewing evaluation models focused on these two elements (Havelt and Ramesh, 2002).

Agenda phase: Agenda phase is the stage that threads are inserted into the agenda. This Stage is vital because if an issue dose not enters agendum no action regarding that will happen (Jones, 1984).

Nelson has introduced four stages in explaining the steps of agendum. First, «observing» and analyzing is made in terms of the attention that could potentially be done by the government to attract. Then "choosing" question in order to answer the question or lack response with regards to the level of understanding of the epidemic at the state level and also possibility to find an appropriate response for issue will be considered and Then with "prioritization", the case position is analyzed among the set of problems and finally the case will be proved and preserved until the decision stage (Lester and Stewart, 2008).

With a similar approach, Jones (1984) also in explaining the process agendum with the emphasis on transparency and aggregation of individual interests, groups and government officials, mentioning five stages in explaining agendum element; including understanding the problem, problem definition, aggregation of interests and transition from individual to group, cooperation with government officials and finally Communication among groups and government decision makers (Jones, 1984).

The content aspects also present Models to analyze the process output agendum. According to one of these patterns, the five aspects of having generalization, being general, being multidimensional, social sensitivity and sensitivity value are introduced as a characteristics and criteria's for order desirability of the selected case.

Some other commentators also like knob and Russ and King Don has distanced slightly from a process view and the content and will attempt to provide a description on the formation of ordered patterns. knob and Russ have described three models of external devised (arise agenda from the forces, outside of the state), internal devised (arising from within state) and public mobilization (transformation agendum to a social demands) as a dominant model to describe the different regimes (Havelt and Ramesh, 2002) and Kingdon (Bridgetown, 2007) with an approach close to the knob

and Russ' approach, introduces the three streams include «Problems and difficulties stream», «policy stream» and «political stream»; with the difference that intersection of these three streams simultaneously is visible in one regime and the result is the opening of policy valves in the Community.

Adjustment and selection: After identifying the problem and agenda, state officials consult about it and they try to offer suggestions for solving the problem (Jones, 1984). During this process, a basis for policy is provided and with its payment, the actions to regulate a ratified policy will be under way (Walker *et al.*, 2001). Finally with the legalization and the legitimized policy, the adjustment and selection stage ends (Alvani, 2009). This process, which shows nature of regulation process and selecting a policy, is seen in many models; models such as Meir's model Meyer (1991) and Grindle and Thomas (1991), the model of United Nations Department of Technical Assistance for Development (1992). As an example, United Nations with providing a model makes steps for considering a policy that some of its elements include «determining inputs», «determining partial objectives and relationship between them» and «selecting a policy», that observes the regulation and selection process. On the contrary and in contextual approach (Overseeing to regulation and selection of output), Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) provide a model named Policy Implementation Framework (PIF) in which the variables are presented that should be considered in setting the policy so that policies are implemented to be associated with fewer complications. These variables—that are used in conceptual framework of this research—are introduced in three general categories. The first categories are Variables that reflect the nature of a policy and are based on the identification and its special features. These variables include technical considerations (that focus on specific technical problems and a unique system), selected considerations (selection of target groups based on characteristics and qualitative differentiation) and coverage area of law (refers to the number and quantity) and the required behavioral changes (That focus is on the social and cultural considerations). The second category are structural variables; that includes applying the methods and essentials of a good cause (that emphasizes on appropriate structural requirements that must be met, based on causal and logical relations), coordinating related devices (that is important according to the plurality and interaction responsibilities of the government agencies), rules and regulations of executive agencies (relevant to the legal vacuum, obsolete laws and overlaps and interactions between the rules), special administrative power machines of linked devices, supplying resources, roles of decision making about executive agencies, Optimal allocation of

financial resources and participation of target groups through formal ways of codifying and evaluating the rules. The third category, are contextual variables (Or environmental); including the appropriateness of policy with economic conditions-social and technological, support for public sector, Attitudes of target groups, support from lawmakers and leadership Skills and Level of Executive agencies commitment.

Aside from process and content views, some experts have introduced decision making models different conditions with a descriptive view; people like Lindblom (1979) and Braybrooke and Lindblom (1963) For example, Braybrooke and Lindblom (1963) with emphasis on the two variables "the level of available information" and "extent of the changes", have introduced four models of decision making, including revolutionaries, analytical, rational and gradual. They consider the model of policy as the one affected by Information of decision makers and also the amount of the changes compared to previous decisions and depending on the level of each of these two variables, a model of decision making will be predicted. This will be ultimately crystallized in the four models of revolutionary, gradual, analytical and rational (Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1980).

Actors and players in policy:

Introducing the players: Actors in the policy process are either individuals or groups. Diversity of actors that can be member of the following systems of policies and can participate in the policies process is so much that is possible to prepare the a comprehensive list. However to simplify the subject, policy actors can be classified in the following categories: selected brokers, selected policymakers, appointed brokers, beneficiary groups, research organizations and the mass media. The first two groups are located in the state and other three groups in society (Havelt and Ramesh, 2002). Selected brokers include the executive branch (with compilation authorization and implementation of policy) and selected policymakers, legislature (with responsibility of identifying social problems and formulating necessary policies to deal with them) appointed brokers are often addressed as "Bureaucracy", "civil servants" or "government brokers» that most of the tasks related to the design and compilation policies are implemented through them after being completed. Beneficiary groups are individuals or organizations that with influence and dominant power in one field, attempt to reach their goals in a political way. These groups are after having influence on administrator managers and do not want anyone of their own to get the power (YarAhmadi Khorasani, 2008). These groups may have a special role to reflect the state of public affairs. Research organizations, ranging from academic researchers and scientific organizations are from other influencing

Table 1: Policy-making process in agendum stages and regulation
Stage of policy process

Choice	Adjustment	Agendum	Participants	Position (cause) participation
Passing laws (especially in development programs)		Social problems are considered in the legislature The values are provided by the policy	Policymakers (legislative)	Selected brokers
Pass legislation (in development programs the role of influential groups will participation)	The national planning is the process which politicians start it and they are dominant on it Provide solutions in regulation policy In the development and regulation policies the most important role is with the bureaucrats	The values are provided by the policy makers Facts and economic analysis provided by experts Due to operational realities and empirical understanding	Policy makers (executive branch) Technocrats (experts) Bureaucrats (appointed brokers)	Selected policymaker Understand the needs by Specialty Involved in implementation Having implementation and empirical knowledge
Interaction of the legislative committees and executive with pressure groups occurs in this stage and here that is agreement on how to deal with the problem	Social actors able to offer solutions This group has a lot of information on their favorite field In the preparation and implementation of a program that they are effective in a position should have participation	The success of the program depends on the support and participation of the private sector as well The mass media, fundamental interface between state and society and priorities can be general problems and solutions to change	Private sector Research organizations The mass media Other stakeholders and influential	Social actors Interact from policy/access to views of other actors

Table 2: Summary of the interaction between social actors

Interact executive with experts and social actors	In adjustment stage, some solutions behalf of social actors presented to the branches Carry out necessary consultations with the private sector to avoid future opposition (support) Accompanied of social actors in the policies that its implementation is done by social actors (especially cases where occur in the private sector). Continuous assessment reflected the political actions of social actors Public participation in the planning process, as legitimize agents in planning Published a summary of the programs and projects for beneficiaries groups (informing) Amount of the impact independence branches from social pressures on their ability to the codification and implementation of policy
Interact the executive branch and legislative with experts and social actors	In adjustment stage, some of the solutions offered by the branches experts Experts' participation in planning process, as a factor the legitimacy department in scheduled
Interact the executive branch and legislative	Participation the executive branch in choosing selection rules by the legislature Legislative participation in regulation bill by the executive
Interact bureaucrats with the executive branch	Independence bureaucracy (self-serve) Effective organization bottom-up planning and top to bottom
Interact bureaucrats with specialists and community groups	Participation in identifying priorities and propose solutions

Table 3: The diversity of interactions can also be explained in the following table

Social actors	Technocrats (professionals)	Bureaucrats	Policy makers (legislative)	Policy makers (the executive)	Participants
					Policy makers (executive branch) Policy makers (legislative) Bureaucrats Experts (technocrats) Social actors

social actors' and are in the process of agendum that relates studies with agendum do. The mass media is also one fundamental interface between state and society and that enables them to affect the government priorities regarding the society and their solutions. In Table 1, these brokers and their reason of participation in the policy-making process in agendum stages and regulation is listed.

Actors and players interaction: Actors involved in the policy process have communications and interactions

with each other during the process of making policies and it is not that any individual can carry out their duties. In the following, some of the connections and conditions between different actors are briefly discussed (Such as the interaction of the executive and the legislature, interact of the executive with social actors, etc.).

Interaction between legislature and executive: An intervention by members of congress in drafting legislation is the most important point of the interaction

of the legislature and the executive. Interference of congress members and bargaining president is common and sometimes increases the conflict or leads to exchanging privileges to gain support (Havelt and Ramesh, 2002).

Interaction between executive and social actors: In steps of planning and selection, policymakers engage in consulting with social actors and there are after their support. Legislative committees' interaction and executive pressure groups occur at this stage and it is here that the agreement on how to deal with the problem is obtained. In this stage, social actors, including the private sector, provide solutions about the problem to the government (Jones, 1984). And also during the program implementation, the Reflected of the political actions of the private sector are routinely evaluated (United Nations Department of Technical Assistance for Development, 1992).

Interaction between social actors: the Government needs the support of important social groups to codify and implement the policies. If social contradictions are severe, the government may reach a point where identifies that they are incapable of doing the responsibilities related to consideration of the Functionality of the policy. In a society that there are compatible groups, the government can codify and execute policies with the least cost but in countries where there are conflict groups, each of them puts the

government under the pressure to meet the goals of its members and this may cause codify policy with contradictory content and get unhelpful (Havelt and Ramesh, 2002). Summary of the interactions are in Table 2 and 3.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

According to the model of Havlt and Ramesh (2002), policy cycle has agendum elements, regulation, selection, implementation and evaluation. The subject that is evaluated in this study is two elements: "agendum" and "Regulation choice" (Havelt and Ramesh, 2002). Conceptual model of research is shown in Fig. 1.

As it was pointed out in the literature review section, different models are presented for process analysis and content of "Regulation and Selection" and "agendum" by pundits and analysts of this field. In this research an attempt was made to select a model related to the goal of the project among these models and become the evaluation base. The selected Models are listed individually in the following (Table 4).

It is worth mentioning that this study is a type of applied and descriptive study that uses semi closed, closed and also questionnaire interview tools. Given the level of expertise that in this research was intended to have, the selected experts, some members of the former parliament of Representatives, governmental agencies responsible for Regulation the Fourth Program and

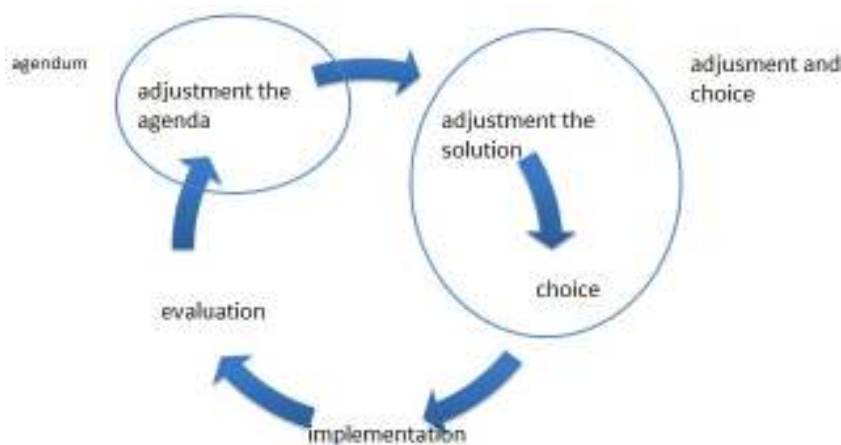


Fig. 1: Conceptual model of research

Table 4: Conceptual framework for evaluating

Actors				
Actors interact	Actors participation	Content analysis (outputs)	Process analysis	
Set of resources		Institute of human sciences and social studies of university JIHAD Sabatier model and Mazmanyany	Mixed model of Jones and Nelson Perception of the programming model of united nations development	Agendum Regulation and selection

Fifth and analyst's policy areas were selected by the method of sampling judgmental objectives.

quantities and analyzed using a range of description and privileges as the follow:

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Assessment of results is presented in the following tables. Comments gathered from the Experts have been

- Weak
- Lower than average
- Higher than average
- Excellent

Table 5: Agenda setting assessment

	Model components	The fourth program	The fifth program
Agendum process	Knowledge and understanding requirements	3.50	2.5
	Define and create a common understanding	2.75	2.5
The content of agendum	Prioritization	3	2.5
	Having a common	3	2.5
	Be the overall	3	3
	Be the multifaceted	2.50	2.5
	Social sensitivity	3.50	3.5
	Sensitivity value	3	3

Table 6: Evaluation regulation and selection

Regulation and selection process	Model components	The fourth program	The fifth program
Content of regulation and selection	Determination partial goals and Understanding the relationship between them	2.5	2.25
	Determination strategy based on existing conditions and desired goals	2.5	2
	Acceptance control goals and strategies	2	2
	Model components		The fourth program
Content of regulation and selection	Contextual variables	Technical considerations	3
		Selection considerations	2.50
		Coverage area of law	1.75
		Behavioral changes required (considerations cultural-social)	2.50
	Structural variables	Clear goals, non-overall and consistent	2.25
		Employing methods and requirements the appropriate causal	4
		Coordination related system	3.50
		Laws and regulations devices	2.75
	Underlying variables	Power and expertise related systems	3.25
		Supply resources	1.50
		Participation target groups through formal compilation of rules	1.50
		Economic contexts-social and technological	2.50
Underlying variables	Support for public sector	1.50	
	Attitudes and resources of constituency groups (parties)	1.50	
	Level of government support	1.75	
	Commitment to enforcing the law enforcers	3	

Table 7: Actor's participation

			Agendum and regulation	Choice
Selected politicians	Legislature	The fourth program	4	From legislative duties
		The fifth program	3.5	
Selected officials	Executive branch	The fourth program	Executive branch functions	3.5
		The fifth program		3
Perceived needs by specialty	Experts (technocrats)	The fourth program	4	Outside of compass access
		The fifth program	4	
Practical and experimental knowledge	Bureaucrats	The fourth program	4	Outside of compass access
		The fifth program	3.5	
Interact policy	Social actors	The fourth program	3	Outside of compass access
		The fifth program	3	

Table 8: Actors interaction

		Executive branch	Legislature	Bureaucrats
Legislature	The fourth program	4 ¹	-	
	The fifth program	3.50		
Bureaucrats	The fourth program	2.75		
	The fifth program	2.75		
Experts and social actors	The fourth program	3.50	3.5	3
	The fifth program	3.50	3.5	2.5

¹: According to the interviewees, interactions between the legislative and executive branches in the fourth and fifth proportional, but they were different in nature. In fourth program, interaction as converge and in the fifth program is a challenge. But in the both cases, high level of interaction has been observed

Agenda setting assessment is shown in Table 5, Evaluation regulation and selection is shown in Table 6, Actor's participation is shown in Table 7, actors interaction is shown in Table 8.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is achieving a framework to assess different aspects of development programs, with emphasis on Iran's fourth and fifth development programs. In this regard, using extensive literature on policy, the two elements of «agendum» and «regulation and selection» were analyzed and evaluated from three aspects of process, content and actors and were based on a conceptual framework arosed from mentioned literature.

Based on results of this study, the main agendum challenge process, especially in the fourth development program was lack of common understanding of the issues. And also from the aspects of the content, in The Fourth and the fifth development programs, the lack of the multi-modal features-it means giving priority to the more general issues that includes more economic, social and cultural and ... aspects-has been emphasized on, in rules and in general, by the bill presented to the parliament.

In the process of regulation and challenging selection that has been emphasized on in the level of both programs, having control over the goals and the strategies is important. In the outputs of the regulation stage, the most important challenge is not employing methods and requirements appropriate for the executive requirements of law. In other words, structure, instruments and specific methods for solving a considered problem in the law that are based on causal relationships and logic have a lower importance in the law implementation.

The limited Power and specialization of the government executive machine and also the technical Considerations of law were identified the other challenges of the content regulation and selection stage. About the actor's participation, the lowest levels of participants were also social actors in the stage of agendum and regulation. And also regarding player's interacts with each other, different results were obtained that the most important one is it's interact with the legislature and executive that was evaluated properly in Both programs, however, the interactive nature in the fourth Program was convergent and in the fifth program was a challenge.

Mentioned cases were Brief reviews of the most important obtained results but a better learning and better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the program needs paying more attention to the various aspects that is evaluated in conceptual framework of this study.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the basic research methodology in this study, the comments of experts about the law of the fourth and fifth program development in Iran have been gathered and it was utilized for evaluation. Aside from the evaluation, an important part of these comments have focused on policy analysis and policy process and presentation amendment suggestions. Suggestions with the least facilities were applicable and brought solutions for many of the challenges in a process and the content in agendum, regulation and choice stage. These proposals and their origin within some main headlines are mentioned in continue:

- **Determination of the appropriate and defensible methodology for prioritization and selection of purposes:** Prioritization means the most important choice of all. To achieve this goal, it is necessary that at the beginning of codification of planning process a specific and defensible methodology be selected to determine priorities; otherwise we will witness a program that in political counterbalance or in non-professional analysis contains all the desired objectives at national, partial and regional areas. In the book "Development Planning, lessons from the experience of more than 100 countries in development planning 2" (such as Iran) it is Explicitly stated that even a successful experience in the development of comprehensive planning in the world does not exist and the comprehensive development planning virtually eliminates innovation and creativity and restricts performance and Ultimately obstacles the development (19).
- **Providing statistical and appropriate analytical infrastructures:** Accessing appropriate information and statistics, is not a formal imperative in planning; it is Rather an understanding of the current situation that is based of ideal situation. In situations that the economic performance's report will be published with a delay of several years, it will become impossible to identify and analyze the facts and establish baseline

favorable conditions. Other than the data and information, the appropriate models for analyzing and mapping the future actions are also very important. But it is necessary to place the base models appropriate to national circumstances, such as Iran and not developed countries. The experiences from the fourth development plan in economic sector shows that assumed presupposition developed economies are focused on the demand side policies and are unaware of supply side. While having the experiences of the past several decades in Iran and the fluctuations in factors such as the price of foreign exchange, inflation rate and etc. and In spite of significant influence on economic conditions, it wasn't permanent in the real sector of the economy that is producing a source of permanent evolutions and also we can't see any significant improvement in the parameters such as productivity, significant improvement is not observed.

- **Making policy goals compatible with different, considering the relationship between them:** On the one hand the Fourth Program goals, is reducing inflation and on the other hand, some basic orientation program, Like the real price of energy carriers and limiting production subsidies and also determining the price based on market mechanisms are oriented among the inflationary periods. Such disharmonies are significant in other main factors like employment. Setting goals that are not proportional to the experience of past years and are not according to the country's economic capacity are not available.
- **Adapting the goals and executive methods such as those:** In underlying Assumptions of The Fourth Program it has been Decreed that the exchange rate of the dollar increase according to the difference between domestic and foreign inflations; it means that as one of main guidelines of the program, the exchange rate is fixed and its value is predetermined. But in explanation of the corresponding methods of the policy, Article 41 in Fourth program, the determination of the exchange rate has been considered as "Managed float"; it means that the exchange rate will be determined by market and a range will be considered for its fluctuations.; then, If you increase or decrease beyond that range, the Central Bank acts to steer the domain.
- **Manageable goals and policies:** Achieving the goals and policies, stands in need of adequate understanding of the success of the procedure. For this purpose, the goals outlined in the programs must be controlled from the beginning and involves symptoms; while in fourth and fifth development program, many of the goals and policies are lacking this feature.

- **Coordinating and implementing development program with other policies, rules and regulations:** The main reasons for failure of development programs are the Lack of accordance and convergence with other policies and regulations of the country. the Practical methods for their accordance and convergence can be expressed in three main categories; including:
 - Lack of approval of the general policy that basically doesn't require the parliamentary approval; such matters that are under the authority of the executive agencies.
 - Approval of permanent rules that are capable of a long range development plan on the agenda.
 - Providing policy support program packages without delay, interacting with executive agencies politics and attract their commitment, to implement the program.

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